

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 173101
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173101

NODIS

FOR BRZEZINSKI ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT BANGKOK 16152 ACTION SECSTATE INFO NEW DELHI
JUL 25.

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 16152

NODIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHRISTOPHER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: (OVIP: CHRISTOPHER, WARREN), PGOV, IN, PK, BG, NP

SUBJ: INDIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

1. IN THE INITIAL MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S PRIVATE
SECRETARY AND FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA (REPORTED SEPARATELY),
I WAS SOMEWHAT PUZZLED BY THE GREAT EMPHASIS PLACED UPON
INDIA'S RELATIONS WITH ITS NEIGHBORS NEPAL, BANGLADESH, AND
PAKISTAN. THIS SAME THEME WAS EVIDENT IN LONGER CONVERSATIONS
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE IN THE AFTERNOON (ALSO REPORTED
SEPARATELY). AS THE DAY PROGRESSED, I LEARNED MORE ABOUT THIS
APPROACH AND HAD TIME TO EXCHANGE VIEWS WITH AMBASSADOR GOHEEN
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AND HIS ABLE STAFF, PARTICULARLY DCM SCHNEIDER.

2. ON REFLECTION, IT SEEMS PLAIN THAT THE DESAI GOVERNMENT
ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO U.S. RECOGNITION OF ITS LEADING
ROLE ON THE SUB-CONTINENT AND ITS INTENTION TO STRESS ASSISTANCE,
COOPERATION, AND MUTUAL BENEFIT IN PLAYING THIS ROLE. SUCH AN
APPROACH CONTRACTS WITH THE MORE MUSCULAR APPROACH OF MRS GANDHI'S

GOVERNMENT WHICH STRESSED INDIAN POWER AND NATURAL NEGEMONY AS THE BASIS FOR ITS PREDOMINENCE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT. WHILE SOME OF THE LATTER SENTIMENT MAY WELL REMAIN, IT WAS NOT EVIDENT IN MY TALKS AND IS CLEARLY OF LESS IMPORTANCE. THERE WAS ALSO LESS CONCERN ABOUT AND HOSTILITY TOWARD PAKISTAN.

3. IN ADDITION, THE PREVIOUS INDIAN PREOCCUPATION WITH THE GREAT POWERS, U.S., USSR AND CHINA) SEEMED TO HAVE GIVEN WAY TO EMPHASIS ON RELATIONS BETWEEN AND AMONG SUB-CONTINENT STATES. THE EMPHASIS OF THIS GOVERNMENT ON GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT APPEARS TO BE AN ASPECT OF THIS NEW APPROACH.

4. SO LONG AS THIS NEW APPROACH REFLECTS MUTUAL INTERESTS AND COOPERATION IN SOLVING COMMON PROBLEMS AND ESCHEWS ANY ATTEMPT AT HEAVY-HANDED DOMINATION, IT DESERVES ENCOURAGENEMTN. I TRIED TO FOLLOW THIS TACK IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS AS WELL AS MEDIA CONTACT.
WHITEHOUSEUNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

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